



700.13 Civilian Volunteer Programs

Number Series: 700—Specialized Unit
Approved Date: October 04, 2018
Review Due Date: October 04, 2021

Sheriff's Approval: Digital
Review Frequency: 3- Years

POLICY

Citizen Volunteers representing the Hendry County Sheriff's Office will work in a professional manner.

PROCEDURE

A. Volunteer Programs

1. Civilian volunteer programs serving the Hendry County Sheriff's Office are as follows:
 - a. Volunteers in Patrol
 - b. Internship Program
 - c. Mounted Posse
 - d. Sheriff's Explorers
 - e. Volunteer Assistants

B. Authority

1. Volunteers do not have any law enforcement authority or latitude. They are not certified as law enforcement officers and are not empowered to enforce the law to an extent greater than that of a normal citizen. Volunteers shall direct their activities to duties in which they have received training. Volunteers shall not be permitted to carry any weapons, lethal or non-lethal.

C. Volunteer Personnel

1. Volunteer personnel are civilians affiliated with the Sheriff's Office because of their interest in contributing to the mission of the Sheriff's Office in a support capacity.

D. Background Investigations

1. All volunteer personnel will complete a standard Sheriff's Office employment application and participate in an interview process prior to selection as a volunteer. Volunteer personnel will be subject to a background investigation prior to approval for service. Human Resource or their designee will conduct the background investigation. The content of the background investigation will include at a minimum the following:
 - a. Criminal history inquiry/background check (NCIC/FCIC, BULLET, Clerk of Courts, DHSMV, ACISS, DOJ/FDLE sexual offender, etc.)
 - b. Fingerprinting
 - c. Substance screening (with the exception of Interns)

E. Identification of Volunteers

1. All volunteers shall wear their Sheriff's Office identification when at Sheriff's Office facilities or working in an official capacity.

F. Training

1. Community Service Captain will ensure training and orientation is complete for all volunteer personnel.
2. Volunteer personnel will be trained in the performance of authorized job duties. Training will be documented and will be provided to volunteer personnel in accordance with Sheriff's Office training protocols and written directives. Records of all volunteer personnel training will be provided to the Sheriff's Community Service Captain.

G. VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

1. **Volunteers in Public Safety (VIPS) and Volunteer Assistants**

- a. Qualifications for Citizen Observer Program and Volunteer Assistants:
 1. Must be at least 18 years of age
 2. Must live or work in Hendry County
 3. Volunteer 12 hours per month
- b. VIP Job Duties:
 1. Actively patrol the unincorporated areas of Hendry County, reporting suspicious activity.
 2. Assist the Road Patrol Unit in various special details such as, but not limited to, moving equipment, manning a barricade, parades and special events.
 3. Direct and control traffic which requires successfully completing the traffic direction and control course.
 4. Assist Fleet Maintenance with various duties.
 5. Maintain VIP vehicle by having it serviced when needed.
 6. General clerical and administrative duties.
- c. VIP Scope of Authority:
 1. A VIP actually has no more legal authority than a regular citizen. The Sheriff has not delegated any special authority to VIPs specifically while "on duty" or on patrol.
 2. A citizen observer has **no** legal authority to stop, detain, or hinder any person from moving about freely.
 3. A citizen observer has **no** legal authority to stop and question any person(s).
 4. A citizen observer has **no** authority to, and will not, carry any type of weapon while working in the Citizen Observer Program, even if licensed to do so.
- d. Volunteer Assistant Duties:
 1. Desk officer duties
 2. Filing in Records/Districts
 3. Data entry
 4. Other administrative duties as needed.

2. Internship Program

a. Administration:

1. An individual requesting to participate in the Internship program is to submit a specific field of study along with their application package.
2. The Community Service Captain or designee assigns the intern to a specific unit. If a rotation of assignment is necessary, the Community Service Captain or designee will make the adjustment, inform the affected units, and provide them a schedule (exception: CID; the CID commander will adjust the assignment).
3. In the event the intern requests assignment to the Criminal Investigations Division, the intern must sign a statement of confidentiality.
4. Any school program progress or verification of time worked reports will be given to the unit supervisor for verification.
5. The Community Service Captain or designee, with input from the supervisor of the unit the intern is assigned, will complete an overview of the intern's participation in the program.

b. Intern Duties

1. Perform various administrative duties for units within the Sheriff's Office as directed by the Community Service Captain or designee.

3. Explorers

a. The Explorers are sanctioned by the Boy Scouts of America.

b. Qualifications:

1. Students between the ages of 14 and 21 who have an interest in law enforcement
2. Maintain a GPA of 2.0
3. Have no disciplinary issues at school resulting in suspension or expulsion
4. No involvement or association with gangs
5. Remain crime and drug free

c. Duties

1. Under direct supervision, Explorers are permitted to direct vehicles to off street parking spots.
2. Attend and represent the Sheriff's Office at various functions and events.

4. Mounted Posse Volunteers

a. Qualifications for Mounted Posse Program and Volunteers:

1. Must be 18 year of age or older.
2. Members must be available for call-outs.
3. Members must participate in a minimum of eight hours of training per month.
4. Must participate in 16 hours of patrol or events participation per quarter.
5. Must own a horse that is Mounted Posse qualified, 15-hands or more.
6. Have adequate transportation.
7. Must live in Hendry County or adjoining county.

8. Must pass a pre-screen test to demonstrate horsemanship, horse control and abilities.
 9. Must provide a physical release from a licensed physician.
 10. Must possess a valid Florida driver's license.
- b. Job Duties:
1. Utilizes horses to support personnel during search and recovery operations of missing persons.
 2. Limited natural disasters search.
 3. Search for articles of evidentiary value.
 4. Participate in parades and special events and other demonstrations.
 5. Additional duties may be assigned.

DEFINITIONS

VIPS – Volunteers in Public Safety

VOLUNTEER – The Volunteer has no salary, benefits, or labor relations rights of a county employee and serves “at the will” of the sheriff.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR – A designee assigned to the Hendry County Sheriff's Office Volunteers in Public Safety program that assists in the organization and day-to-day operations of the Volunteer Unit.

VOLUNTEER IN PATROL – Are unarmed civilians who do not have arrest powers and who have successfully completed and approved orientation/training program. These volunteers enhance regular patrol personnel by working in assigned areas.

REFERENCES

State/Federal Regulations:

None

CFA:

CFA Standards 2.09M, 13.01M and 18.12

Forms:

None

Other Policy/ Procedure References:

None